FOLLOWING TRAIL TO-DAY OF LINCOLN'S ASSASSIN

Kindred of Those Who Figured in Booth's Flight Fifty Years Ago Still Dwell in Unchanged Country Between Potomac and Patuxent Rivers.

A Familiar Road Scene in Southern Maryland.

THE assassination of Abraham Lincoln, the fiftieth anniversary of which is April 14, is still a current topic in that part of Maryland through which John Wilkes Booth and David Herold, one of his accomplices, fled after the great tragedy at Ford's Theatre in Washington during the performance of "Our American Cousin" by Laura Keene and her troupe.

This stretch of country lies between the Potomac and Patuxent rivers.

Its people were especially horrified by the crime. Mrs. Mary E. Surratt, who with Herold, Payne and Atzerodt perished on the scaffold, was a native of that neighborhood. Before her marriage she was Miss Jenkins, and was a member of one of the old and widespread families of the lower Potomac country. She was a devout member of St. Mary's Catholic Church at Piscataway—a hamlet which was an Indian settlement when the first of the Europeans came—and she was related to and on cordial terms of acquaintance with most of the dwellers in the counties of Prince George's and Charles, and a considerable number in the county of St. Mary's. Down there to-day are hundreds of old men and women who speak of her tenderly.

Dr. Samuel A. Mudd, who, not knowing that the President had been shot, reduced the fracture of Booth's ankle, which the murderer sustained in catching a spur in the flag which draped the President's private box as he, Booth, leaped from the murder-box to the stage, was a physician known by everybody in the three rural counties below Washington City. He was a member of one of the most numerous families in that part of Maryland, and it is within reason to say that to-day thousands of his kin are living in the territory through which Booth and Herold fled. The name is a very common one in the southern counties of Maryland, and Sidney Mudd the elder, who long represented that district in Congress, was a kinsman, and so of course is Sidney Mudd the younger, who was elected to Congress from that district last fall.

Dr. Mudd for his part in the tragedy was sentenced by military court to Dry Tortugas for life, but in 1869 was pardoned by President Andrew Johnson. Returning to his home, he practised medicine till his death in 1882. His widow died four years ago and the family house, in which Booth's ankle was set, is dwelt in to-day by Dr. Mudd's son and his wife and children.

Samuel Cox and Frank Robey, prosperous farmer and overseer, who pointed out to Booth a place of concealment in a bit of dense pineland on the Cox farm and who brought the fugitive into communication with Thomas Jones, who had been a Confederate agent, are both dead, but their descendants and collateral kindred are numerous, and Cox's daughter is the wife of the clerk of the county of Charles.

Jones died a few years ago. Throughout the war he maintained a signal station on the Maryland side of the Potomac at Pope's Creek, and he transferred mail and supplies out of the Union lines and into the Confederate lines in Virginia and smuggled travellers of many kinds through the prohibited lines. For ten days, though the country swarmed with spies and was searched house by house, and it was thought foot by foot, Jones supplied Booth and Herold with food in their hiding place in the pines, and on a propitious night started them across the Potomac into Virginia. A couple of miles from the place of this exploit Jones's son runs a blacksmith shop, and in every mile of the country are relations of this man. Wilkes Booth himself was known to a large number of residents of that region, having often visited in the villages of Piscataway, Bryantown and Port Tobacco, and at the homes of various plantation holding gentry roundabout. Herold, though of a Washington family, had relations down there and because of his frequent visits had a fair knowledge of the roads of the section.

Samuel A. Mudd, Son of Dr. Mudd, Mrs. Mudd and Their Children.

That part of the country has undergone but few changes, though, of course, to people living there the changes appear to be numerous. It has been slow to recover from the economic overturn due to the Civil War. For reasons not easy to explain, unless it be the absence of the usual attractions such as fertile land and ready and profitable employment, very little immigration has turned that way, and such population changes as have come about have been due to death, birth and removals to large cities—generally to Washington and Baltimore. However, all over the country have spread the younger and often the more adventurous members of these old families which have been settled for many generations in this picturesque peninsula between the rivers Potomac and Patuxtent and the Chesapeake Bay.

Commerce with the outer world is maintained principally by the steamboats which make the river landings—many of them old and worn—and which poke their slow-going noses up the rivers and broad creeks tributary to the Potomac which so abundantly water this land. A single track of railroad was built in this country in 1873 and extends from the main line connecting Washington with Baltimore to a point halfway down the peninsula, its lower terminus being a settlement consisting of a waiting room and two dwellings at some distance from the track. In this large and well populated territory are three small towns—Marlborough, La Plata and Leonardtown, county seats of Prince George's, Charles and St. Mary's—and scores of little places bearing names on the map, a few of which are the merest hamlets and most of which are only a store at a crossroad with perhaps two or three dwellings near by.

A DISTRICT OF FEW TELEPHONES AND MUCH PEDIGREE.

The telephone was introduced a few years ago, but except along a few of the more frequently travelled roads the jingle of a telephone call is not heard. Ox teams are often met with, but these are not so numerous as they once were, nor so numerous as they now are on the Virginia side of the Potomac.

There is pride of ancestry among the old families, most of whom trace their coming to Maryland back to the landing of the Calvert Pilgrims in 1634, or to the decades of active immigration soon following that event. It is a land of Revolutionary American stock, and it would be quite unusual to find a family in the humblest home down there whose ancestors were not soldiers in the American Revolution.

There is a low degree of illiteracy among the white people, and there are so many churches that a traveller on Sunday is seldom beyond the sound of their pious bells.

A succession of brooks and branches pass through valleys flowing westward into the Potomac or eastward into the Patuxent, and the intervening ridges are high and steep. Several extensive swamps, thickly grown with timber, mainly birch, mark that part of the country, and two of these swamps, Mattawoman and Zachia, are identified with the flight of Lincoln's assassin. In the days of slave labor the farms were generally large—thousand acre tracts being not uncommon—and were very profitably cultivated, mostly in tobacco, with corn and wheat as auxilliary crops. The land holdings are much smaller to-day. The land under the plow is mainly devoted to corn and tobacco, and a vast area is upgrown in pines. This pine waste is being repaired by the fact that a few years ago it was found that this pine could be converted into pulp for paper making, and the business of cutting and shipping this pine wood is now extensively carried on.

After the assassination Booth mounted a horse in the alley behind the theatre—a horse of the National Hotel where Booth boarded—hired from Jim Pumphrey's livery stable back and rode eastward to the Capitol, along Pennsylvania Avenue to Eleventh Street, and then across the Eastern Branch. A wooden pile bridge spanned the stream then. It was superseded in 1878 by a stone pier bridge, and this has been superseded by an imposing concrete structure. In 1865 there was but one house at the bridge-end, a tavern. It is still there, but a large suburb has grown up. A mile beyond is Good Hope, a small settlement then, and still a small settlement, in which a few of the Civil War houses still hold together. Beyond that point to where Booth reached the Potomac, forty-five miles away, though he travelled further than that, the landscape is little changed. Many of the old houses which Booth knew are there, dwelt in by the children and grandchildren of the men and women who knew him. The road for miles leads through pines and woods, and where it does not the somber pines can be seen to the right and left of the clearings.

When the Surratts moved to a crossroad, ten miles from Washington, they opened a tavern, and this gave to the crossroads the name of Surrattsville. A blacksmith's shop was also there. The tavern and that blacksmith shop are still there, the latter a ruin, and two stores have been built since the great war. The tavern was bought a quarter of a century ago by a neighborhood farmer. It was a foreclosure sale and the house was dilapidated. It has been improved and is maintained neat and trim as a roadside inn. The bell on St. Mary's at Piscataway, where the Surratts worshipped, still tolls, and men who were their neighbors answer its call, but a church has been built at Surrattsville and many of those who formerly attended St. Mary's worship at the new Surrattsville church, St. John's.

Dr. Mudd's house has not changed since Booth was there. His son, Samuel A. Mudd, inherited the place, and farms the same fields his father did. The pines in which Booth and Herold lay concealed were chopped down for cord wood several years ago, and tobacco is being planted on the land this spring. Jones's house still stands.

A LANDSCAPE OF YELLOW ROADS, RAIL FENCES AND CEDAR TREES.

Some of the roads down there have been improved, but most of them are as the people of 1861-'65 knew them. They are generally of yellow clay, with some stretches of yellow sand. Beside them grow cedar trees and along them run rail fences often broken down and usually overgrown with vines. The yellow road, the row of cedar trees and the line of rail fence are the dominating note of the landscape in the Booth country. In the fields are the tobacco barns. These are never painted, but take on a picturesque gray from years of weathering.

The landmarks of Booth's flight after crossing the Potomac River, through King George County, Virginia, across the Rappahannock, and into Carolina County to the farm of Richard Garrett, are numerous. It was at the Garrett farm that Booth and Herold took shelter in a tobacco barn, and on the twelfth day after the murder they were surrounded by a detachment of the 16th New York Cavalry. Herold surrendered. Booth hesitated and through a crack in the barn a match was struck to hay that lay in a corner. While the inside of the barn was alight, Boston Corbett, a sergeant in the 16th New York, saw Booth leaning on a crutch with a carbine in his hand. Thinking that Booth was about to shoot at officers standing on the other side of the burning barn, Corbett fired his carbine, the ball striking Booth at the base of the skull. When Booth fell officers and men rushed into the burning barn and dragged him out. He was laid on the porch of Garrett's farmhouse and died at 7 o'clock in the morning, two hours after the shooting and without regaining consciousness, so far as accounts go. His body was wrapped in a trooper's blanket, tied to a plank with ropes and was hauled in a farm wagon to the Potomac River at Belle Plains, forty miles below Washington. It was taken to the navy yard, laid out on the deck of a monitor moored there, and an autopsy was performed between midnight and dawn, and the body was buried under the stone paving of a cell in the old Washington Penitentiary which stood in the grounds now occupied by the Engineer Barracks and the War College. Several years later, at the instance of Edwin Booth, the actor, a brother of Wilkes Booth, the bones were taken up and reinterred in the Booth family lot in Greenmount Cemetery, Baltimore.

Mudd Homestead, Near Bryantown, Md. The House Looks as It Did in 1865.

APPOMATTOX AND WAR'S END FIFTY YEARS AGO

By WILLIS FLETCHER JOHNSON.

FIFTY years ago this week the great war ended. It had begun just three days less than four years before. Its battles, great and small, had been fought upon the soil of nearly a score of states—at least half of the Union. But probably more than half of the fighting and the slaughter had occurred within the limits of the Old Dominion. The first shot had been fired by a Virginian, though on Carolinian soil, and the two Confederate commanders who so indisputably outranked all others as to stand forever apart in a class of their own were Virginians. It was, therefore, an eternally fit decree of fate that the closing scene—for all that followed was the merest postlude—should occur within and at almost the very heart of that same historic state.

Nearly two years before the Confederacy had have been cut in twain from north to south by the opening of the Mississippi; four months before it had again been sundered from west to east, from the mountains to the sea; and a little later still its last stronghold upon the coast had fallen. A few weeks before, Lee, who at the beginning had ranked only third on the list of brigade commanders, was as a final counsel of desperation made general of all the Confederate forces. But it was too late. The disparity between the two forces, in numbers, in equipment and in potentiality of supplies, steadily increasing for years, had at last become overwhelming. The tragic, heroic scene was set.

On April 8 the hand was raised to strike. Meade, Sheridan and the rest had girt Lee's little remnant about with a cordon of steel, through which there was no escape, and at a blow could have destroyed him utterly. Lee realized the fact, and, having shown himself great in attack in the early stages of the war, and greater still in defence in its later stages, now showed himself greatest of all in surrender at the end. A lesser man might have decided otherwise. He might have bade his army disperse in petty bands of irreconcilable marauders and bushwhackers which it would have cost the federal forces years of time and thousands of lives to subdue. But no such thought was in the mind and heart of this great patriot. Since the Confederacy could not win in open, honorable warfare, it must confess defeat and sue for peace. So on that day he wrote to Grant, asking for peace negotiations.

The initiative had indeed been taken by Grant himself, who a few hours before had written to Lee, suggesting a conference. At the time of that correspondence Grant was not an heroic-appearing figure. Racked with ague and throbbing headache, he sat all day with his feet in a tub of hot mustard water, with mustard plasters on neck and wrists, seeking relief from torment. But the brain was as cool and clear as ever, and the hand was of steel in a glove of velvet. It was not for him to make or even to talk of terms of peace. Those were the duties and powers of statesmen. It was for the soldier to receive the surrender of the foe.

In the early morning of April 9, therefore, from amid the steaming water and the mustard plasters, Grant wrote again to Lee, reminding him of his inability to treat for peace, though assuring him of his earnest desire therefor, and urging strongly an immediate surrender. Then, following his own example at Donelson, where the proposal for "unconditional surrender" was coupled with another "to move immediately upon your works," though still racked with physical torture, he placed himself at the head of his army for, if need be, the final blow of the great steel hammer which had for so many months been pounding the ever-weakening Confederate lines.

The blow, however, was not to be struck. Lee yielded; trebly showing the white flag, not of cowardice, but of manly surrender of a Lost Cause. One message went to Grant, acceding to his offer of a conference for surrender, and a second to Sheridan at the front, and a third to Meade at the rear of the Confederate position, apprising them of this, and requesting suspension of the attack which they had already begun. Sheridan and Meade, not having heard from Grant, at first refused, fearing a ruse to enable the Confederates to escape or to give Johnston time to come up from North Carolina and join Lee, but presently agreed to withhold their hands for two hours to give time for getting word from Grant.

That was enough. Lee's messenger reached Grant. The latter was still racked and almost blinded with sick headache; but the instant he saw the contents of Lee's note he was cured. He dashed off an answering note, and then, in a worn and shabby fatigue uniform, hastened to Sheridan's headquarters. That fiery fighter had his troops in line, awaiting the command to charge. He was excited and demurred almost passionately to Grant's plans. Lee's request for a conference was all a trick to gain time for escape or for a junction with Johnston. If Grant would only give the word to "go in," as he had done once before on a memorable occasion, the Confederates would be smashed to smithereens in about five minutes. But Grant knew Lee, and had faith in his good faith. So the order to "go in" was not given.

A little later Grant and Lee met, in the McLean house near Appomattox Court House. The simple, scantily furnished room was a modest setting for the transcendant scene; according, however, with the appearance of the victor if not with that of the vanquished. For there was a striking contrast between the two. Grant was of medium stature, in simple and almost shabby attire, swordless and unadorned, looking unkempt and haggard after his night of pain. Lee, always of distinguished air, towered half a head above him, and was resplendent in a new dress uniform and the costly sword which had been presented to him by his native state. Neither betrayed the emotions which he doubtless felt, though of the two Lee looked the more cheerful and Grant the more depressed.

There was a cordial handclasp, and in a moment the two were chatting about old times when they had served together—though widely separated by age and rank—in the Mexican war. This talk ran on until Grant was quite oblivious to all else and had to be reminded by Lee of the circumstances of the present moment and of the purpose for which they had met. Down to this time Grant had given no thought to any terms or phrases, and when Lee asked him what terms he had to propose he almost stammeringly replied that he had nothing to suggest except that Lee's men should lay down their arms and not take them up again. To this Lee assented, and then they again rambled off into talk of old times, until once more Lee called a halt with the suggestion that those terms, simple as they were, would better be put into writing.

So Grant took paper and pen, and with his own hand wrote out the brief document, in the form of a personal note to Lee, which stood in effect for a treaty of peace between the nation and the Confederacy. The officers were to retain their side arms, horses and baggage, while the men were to surrender theirs, and then all were to be paroled and to go home. That was all. Lee read the note and accepted it, expressing gratification at the permission to officers to retain their swords and horses, which had not been mentioned before. That led to Lee's saying that the men as well as the officers owned their horses, and asking if they would be permitted to retain them. Grant replied that under the terms of the note as written they would not. Lee read the note again and agreed that that was so.

Then Grant remarked that he guessed there would be no more fighting of any account; at any rate, he hoped so; and he supposed that most of the men were farmers, whose lands had been ravaged by the war, and who would have a pretty hard time in planting crops that year under any circumstances. If they hadn't any horses their case would be almost hopeless. They probably would not be able to plant enough crops to carry their families through the next winter. So, as the United States government had no use for the horses and didn't want them, he would let the men keep them, so that as soon as they got home they could go right at their spring ploughing, for which it was already high time!

That was all. Lee wrote a brief note accepting the terms, and Grant ordered Lee's half famished men to be supplied with Federal rations as long as they needed them. He also forbade his own troops to fire any salutes or engage in any manifestations of exultation which might add to the humiliation of the conquered foe. Lee rode back to and through his own lines, amid the tears of his devoted followers; amid, in truth, such a scene as few armies have ever witnessed. "The effect on the worn and battered troops—some of whom had fought since April, 1861, and, sparse survivors of hecatombs of fallen comrades, had passed unscathed through such hurricanes of shot as, within four years, no other men had ever experienced—passes mortal description. Whole lines of battle rushed up to their beloved old chief, and, choking with emotion, broke ranks and struggled with each other to wring him once more by the hand. Men who had fought throughout the war and who knew what the agony and humiliation of that moment must be to him, strove with a refinement of unselfishness and tenderness which he alone could fully appreciate to lighten his burden and mitigate his pain. With tears pouring down both cheeks, General Lee at length commanded voice enough to say, 'Men, we have fought through the war together. I have done the best that I could for you.' Not an eye that looked on that scene was dry. Nor was this the emotion of sickly sentimentalists, but rough and rugged men, familiar with hardships, danger and death."

HONOR MAN WHOSE BOOK "SHOOK NATION"

A PROJECT is on foot to erect a simple tombstone on the grave of a man one of whose books ranked next to "Uncle Tom's Cabin" in stimulating public opinion against slavery and played a considerable part in winning the election of 1860 for Abraham Lincoln. This man was Hinton Rowan Helper. On March 9, 1909, he disappeared from public view. Later he was found dead in an obscure lodging house in Washington under circumstances which indicated too plainly that he had put an end to his existence himself. Having no relatives or appreciative friends, his body was about to be placed in a grave in the Potter's Field, when notice of his death caught the attention of Stephen H. Hines, a resident of Washington. Recognizing the part that the octogenarian had played in the history of the country, he assumed the funeral expenses and the body was laid in the Capital Cemetery.

Helper was born in Davie County, N. C., December 27, 1829. In 1851 he started for San Francisco by way of Cape Horn. The vessel was dismasted and put in at Valparaiso for repairs. This was his first visit to the continent in whose future he was in later years to take an active interest. His experiences in California were later published in a volume called "The Land of Gold."

In 1857 he published "The Impending Crisis of the South: How to Meet It." This was the work which was to place his name on the pages of American history. The son of a slaveholder, he inherited no love for the negro race, but his attention was early drawn to the fact that slavery as an institution was a curse to the Southern States. His book "shook the country," in the language of one historian. The Abolition Society, which was rapidly growing, saw in it a champion of their cause, while the South considered it a deadly attack upon their "peculiar institution."

Few if any books have appeared in this country which were more strongly denounced by one group, or more ardently commended by another. Of the work 144 editions of 1,005 copies each were printed. Its circulation in the South was practically impossible. The possession of a copy would bring down upon the owner the charge of being an abolitionist, and even his life would be in danger. Three men, it is said, were hanged in Arkansas for having copies in their possession. Southern merchants anxious to read it, but not daring to order it through the mails, would have copies secreted in boxes of goods sent to them from the North. In the course of the Lincoln campaign an abstract was published as the "Compendium of the Impending Crisis." Thousands of copies were circulated. It proved to be a most powerful campaign document.

Helper's services to the youthful Republican party were recognized by his appointment in 1861 as consul to Buenos Ayres. Here he, in 1863, married Miss Maria Louise Rodriguez. In 1866 he returned home. He later spent a great deal of time travelling in South America, the great ambition of his life being the building of an intercontinental railroad, to be named the Three Americas Railway, or the Pan-American Railroad. Its purpose was the joining of Bering Strait with the Strait of Magellan. Surveying was undertaken at different points with a view to locating a practicable route. To this project he devoted his time and talent. His entire fortune was dissipated. William S. Pelletreau, of the New York Historical Society, with the sympathetic approval of ex-Senator Elihu Root, has undertaken to raise the few hundred dollars necessary to place a modest stone over Helper's grave.

The Ottoman Empire is made up of Turkey in Europe—the strip of territory stretching across from the Black Sea to the Adriatic—and Turkey in Asia, which includes Arabia, Syria and Palestine, and provinces in the isles of Samos and Cyprus are also under the Sultan's rule.